



MORPETH
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL
REPORT
FOR THE YEAR 1923,

BY

The Medical Officer of Health

(J. P. PHILIP, O.B.E., M.D., D.P.H.)

AND


The Sanitary Inspector

(J. ATKINSON, C.R.S.I.)

Morpeth :

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1924.



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Morpeth Rural District Council.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE MORPETH RURAL
DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I have the honour to again present my Annual Report as to the Sanitary conditions and the Public Health in your district during the year 1923.

It is unnecessary for me to repeat year by year the physical features of the district. It is sufficient to say that it covers a very large area of 12 by 20 to 25 miles, and that the Eastern part 12 by 10 miles is mostly colliery, and the rest is purely agricultural. Little change has occurred in the latter, but great changes are now going on the Eastern Colliery area.

POPULATION.—The population given by the Ministry of Health to middle of the year for statistical purposes is 18,270. There have been 364 births during the year and 189 deaths, which gives an increase of 175. The number of new houses occupied has been 166, chiefly at the rapidly growing colliery village of Lynemouth. So that I think the figures rather underestimate the actual population. Calculation of 5 persons to the house, the number occupying the houses would be 830. These houses have to a certain extent relieved the congestion somewhat.

DIVISIONS OF THE DISTRICT.—In the East are the Collieries and in the West are the Agricultural areas, and so distinctly are they divided that a line from Felton to Morpeth divides the one from the other. The County Asylum forms a community by itself, but as its very high mortality rate has to be included in the district rate, it naturally increases our general death rate, and hides our very low local death rate. I hope to bring this more before the public because the district which is very healthy, suffers from the apparently high death rate by the addition of the deaths in the Asylum.

HOUSING.—Since I wrote my last annual report overcrowding has been much relieved. During the year plans have been passed for the erection of 330 new houses of which 166 are occupied. Calculating 5 persons to a house, this gives 830 people accommodated. Still more houses are required. Those houses are excellent and fill a greatly required need for houses of 3, 4, and 5 rooms. The New Bye-Laws provide that all should have cemented yards. In most cases there is scullery accommodation, so that washing need not be done in the living rooms. Most of these houses have been erected by the Ashington Coal Company at Linton, Ellington, and the new village of Lynemouth. The houses which I had to complain about in Pegswood have been put in order, and there is now no serious overcrowding there. Cresswell Estate has changed hands, and I trust there may be improvements in the village soon.

OVERCROWDING.—In my last Annual Report I made many complaints of overcrowding. These have been mostly relieved, but for want of houses in many colliery villages large numbers of the workers have to find lodgings in other districts. At North Seaton Colliery 390 are unable to find houses and live outside the district, at Pegswood there are over 200 in the same case. At Linton last year 1,311 lived outside the district, that has been only partially relieved by the 33 new houses built there. At Grangewood the Stobswood Company propose to build 42 new houses and 2 at Norwood which will greatly relieve congestion.

SCAVENGING & DISPOSAL OF SEWAGE.—The scavenging is only fairly done, and contractors have to be constantly reminded of their duties. The sewage disposal at Lynemouth into the sea is satisfactory. At Pegswood things are unsatisfactory, and long delay has been caused by disagreement between the Council and the Colliery managers. A new system has been planned, but not yet carried out. The same has to be said of the Widdrington to Broomhill Sewage Plan. This is a great pity as all the new houses are provided with W.C's. and Bathrooms. The disposal system at Linton is a great improvement on the old system, and the effluent is very satisfactory.

WATER SUPPLIES.—The district is now well-supplied with water, but if the population grows in the East, as seems likely, the supply will certainly have to be supplemented beyond what the Tyne-mouth System can supply. The other System which supplies the County Asylum and many other places on the line, cannot give any further facilities for water supply. If the population in the Eastern part of the district increases, as seems probable, to an enormous extent some much larger supply than can be got from Fenrother, will have to be found, and although it may seem ridiculous at present we may have to go to the head of the Wansbeck or the Ottercaps, or the head of the Hart above Scots Gap to find the necessary water, smaller supplies could be found at Smallburn or at Doehill

FEVER HOSPITALS.—As I suggested that a combination with neighbouring districts was the best means of securing a general fever hospital, meetings were held at which representatives from Ashington, Newbiggin, Bedlington, and the Morpeth Rural District were present. The matter was discussed, but no agreement was arrived at, and so it now stands, and no Hospital has been established. Fortunately the Small Pox Hospital has been kept in good condition, and was quite ready to admit patients when an epidemic occurred in the district in November.

BYE-LAWS.—The Bye-Laws for the district have been revised, and many improvements have been added. They are now quite up-to-date.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE DISTRICT.—

1. NEW HOUSES are still required not so much to relieve overcrowding, which is now not so serious, but to take the place of such houses as

have been condemned at Stobswood Wood Row, at Widdrington, South Broomhill and Stone Row, North Broomhill.

2. IMPROVED DRAINAGE. This is still held up, but a new system at Pegswood Colliery is on the way, and will, I trust, soon be started. The large system for Stobswood, Widdrington, Broomhill, and Chevington is still waiting a Government grant. At Lynemouth the new system should be very satisfactory, as it is carried well out to sea.
3. The need for a general Fever Hospital has already been mentioned.
4. COLLIERY ROADS.—The new bye-laws make it necessary that the roads should be well made. The paving of yards and making good roads has improved many of the old houses which are more easily kept clean. The schools must also benefit by this.
5. If the Government will not give grants for Baby Welfare, I would recommend local centres to establish committees and form centres of their own, raising funds by subscriptions. I am certain it would repay the trouble and expense. The reduction in infantile deaths is, I am sure, due to the education of mothers. But if I may suggest it, breast feeding should be encouraged more than it is. Unless there is very good reason for using any other food, every child should be brought up on the breast for the first seven or eight months.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTH RATE.—The number of births during the year was 364 of which 176 were males and 188 females. There were 15 illegitimate children. The birth rate per 1000 is therefore 19·9, although this is still much below the average it is better by 1·9 than the previous year.

DEATH RATE.—The number of deaths was 189, exactly the same number as in 1922, of these 94 were males and 95 females. This is calculated for residents, whether in the district or outside. The death rate per 1000 residents is therefore 10·3. Only deaths of residents are now calculated as all deaths in public institutions such as the asylums or hospitals, etc., are allocated to their respective districts. There were 71 deaths of non residents in the Asylum, so, if this is included there were 260 deaths in the district, giving a rate of 13·4 per 1000.

INFANTILE DEATH RATE.—Although the births were more numerous than in 1922 (in which only 329 occurred), yet the 364 births for the year are much below the average, yet the death rate in the first year of their life was much lower. Only 21 deaths occurred in that time. This gives an infantile death rate of 57·6 per 1000 children born.

SPECIAL DISEASES.—In the following I have tabulated the most important diseases with the rate per 1000 of the population :

DISEASE.	1921.		1922.		1923.	
	No. of Cases.	Rate per 1000	No. of Cases.	Rate per 1000	No. of Cases.	Rate per 1000
Pulmonary Phthisis ...	16	0·5	15	·82	11	·60
All Tubercular Diseases..	11	0·5	22	·99	16	·87
All Respiratory Diseases	35	1·9	46	2·25	33	1·8
Cancer	21	1·1	12	·71	19	1·03
Infectious Diseases ...	9	0·4	13	·66	3	·16
Diarrhoea (all forms) ...	11	0·5	0	·0	2	·10

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The number of cases notified during the year was 122. The numbers of each disease are tabulated below :

Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	9
Scarlatina	...	...	...	...	52
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	3
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	3
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	34
Other Tuberculosis diseases	...	...	...	...	13
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...	1
Small Pox	...	...	...	...	6
Ophthalmia neonatorum	...	...	...	...	1
Encephalitis lethargica	...	...	...	...	1

There were only three deaths amongst these, one from each of the following : Measles, Whooping Cough, and Encephalitis Lethargica.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. P. PHILIP.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN MORPETH R. D., 1923—Civilians Only.

CAUSES OF DEATH.						M.	F.
ALL CAUSES						94	95
1.	Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...
2.	Small-pox	...	...	...	...
3.	Measles	...	...	...	...		1
4.	Scarlet fever	...	...	...	...
5.	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	1	
6.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...
7.	Influenza	...	...	...	...
8.	Encephalitis lethargica	...	...	...	...	1	
9.	Meningococcal meningitis	...	...	...	...
10.	Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	5	6
11.	Other tuberculous diseases	...	...	...	...	2	3
12.	Cancer, malignant disease	...	...	...	...	7	12
13.	Rheumatic fever	...	...	...	...
14.	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	2	1
15.	Cerebral hæmorrhage, etc.	...	...	...	...	3	5
16.	Heart disease	...	...	...	...	6	10
17.	Arterio-sclerosis	...	...	...	...	2	3
18.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	2	1
19.	Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	...	12	4
20.	Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	...	1	1
21.	Ulcer of stomach or duodenum.	...	...	...	...	1	
22.	Diarrhoea, &c. (under 2 years)	...	...	...	...	1	1
23.	Appendicitis and typhlitis	...	...	...	...	1	2
24.	Cirrhosis of liver	...	...	...	...		1
25.	Acute and chronic nephritis	...	...	...	...	6	5
26.	Puerperal sepsis	...	...	...	...		1
27.	Other accidents and diseases of pregnancy and parturition	...	...	...	...		2
28.	Congenital debility and malformation, premature birth	...	...	...	...	6	7
29.	Suicide	...	...	...	...
30.	Other deaths from violence	...	...	...	...	9	1
31.	Other defined diseases	...	...	...	...	26	27
32.	Causes ill-defined or unknown	...	...	...	...		1
Special Causes (included above)							
	Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...
	Polioencephalitis	...	...	...	...
Deaths of Infants under 1 year { Total						11	11
{ Illegitimate						2	
TOTAL BIRTHS						176	188
	Legitimate	...	...	...	...	168	181
	Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	8	7
POPULATION						18,	270

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE,
SOMERSET HOUSE,
LONDON, W.C., 2.

TABLE II.

TABLE X.—**Birth-rate, Death-rate, and Analysis of Mortality** during the year 1923.

(Provisional figures. The rates for England and Wales have been calculated on a population estimated to the middle of 1923, while those for the towns have been calculated on populations estimated to the middle of 1922. The mortality rates refer to the whole population as regards England and Wales, but only to civilians as regards London and the groups of towns.)

	BIRTH-RATE PER 1,000 TOTAL POPULA- TION.	ANNUAL DEATH-RATE PER 1000 POPULATION.										RATE PER 1000 BIRTHS.				PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL DEATHS.			
		All Causes	Enteric Fever.	Small-Pox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping Cough	Diphtheria.	Influenza.	Violence	Diarrhoea and Enteritis (under Two Years.			Total Deaths under One Year.			Causes of Death certifi- ed by Registered Medical Practitioners.	Inquest Cases.	Uncertified Causes of Death.
England and Wales - - - - -	19.7	11.6	0.01	0.00	0.14	0.03	0.10	0.07	0.22	0.44	7.7	69	92.0	6.9	1.1				
105 County Boroughs and Great Towns, including London.	20.4	11.6	0.01	0.00	0.15	0.03	0.12	0.09	0.22	0.40	9.9	72	92.2	7.2	0.6				
157 Smaller Towns (1921 Adjusted Populations 20,000-50,000).	19.8	10.6	0.01	0.00	0.19	0.02	0.10	0.6	0.21	0.38	6.4	69	92.6	6.1	1.3				
London - - - - -	20.2	11.2	0.01	0.00	0.08	0.02	0.09	0.13	0.17	0.45	10.2	60	90.8	9.1	0.1				
Morpeth Rural District - - - - -	19.9	10.3	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.54	0.10	21	94.0	6.0	0.05				

TABLE III.

DISTRICT.	Scarlet Fever	Diph- theria.	Pneu- monia.	Ery- sipelas.	Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	Pulmonary Tuberculosis.	Other Tubercular Diseases.	Small- pox.	Enteric Fever.
Broomhill	5	1	2	...	...	2	3	...	...
Widdrington	4	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Chevington	8	1	1	1	...	4	2	...	...
Cresswell	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Linton	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Low Coldrife	5	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ferneybeds	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lynemouthn	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
North Seaton	3	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Hepscott	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Pegswood	2	...	...	...	...	4	2	6	...
Woodhorn	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Ellington... ..	1	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...
North Gate	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cambo	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
LoughirstGr	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Barmoor	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bothalhaugh	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Red Row .....	...	2	...	1	...	...	3	...	...
Eshott .....	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Loughirst .....	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...
Tranwell .....	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Felton Crossings.....	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Ulgham Grange C'ings.	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Mitford Steads .....	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
East Loan .....	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Asylum .....	...	...	...	...	...	14	...	...	...
TOTAL...	52	9	3	3	1	34	13	6	1

TABLE IV.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	NUMBER OF CASES NOTIFIED.								TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED IN EACH LOCALITY.		
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.							Colliery.	Agri- cultural	Asylum.
		Under 1 year.	1 and under 5 years.	5 and under 15 years.	15 and under 25 years.	25 and under 45 years.	45 and under 65 years.	65 and upwards			
Scarlet Fever	52	...	3	44	4	...	1	...	49	3	...
Diphtheria	9	...	1	8	...	...	...	...	9	...	...
Pneumonia	3	...	...	2	...	...	...	1	3	...	...
Erysipelas	3	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	3	...	...
Ophthalmia neonatorum	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	3	...	...
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	34	...	1	4	8	18	3	...	1	...	...
Other Tubercular Diseases	13	...	2	8	...	2	1	...	19	1	14
Small-pox	6	...	...	1	2	2	1	...	13	...	...
Enteric Fever	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	6	...	...
TOTALS...	122	1	7	67	16	23	7	1	104	4	14

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE

MORPETH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my report for year ending 31st December, 1923

NEW BUILDINGS (ORDINARY.)

The following plans have been submitted to your Council and approved of:—

2 Wooden Dwellings—Quarry Wood.
 Addition to Dwelling „ „
 94 New Houses, Linton.
 2 New Houses, West Thirston.
 2 Cottages, West Thirston.
 Wood Bungalow, West Thirston.
 New Presbyterian Church and Hall, West Thirston.
 81 New Houses, Lynemouth.
 8 Business Premises, Lynemouth.
 New Co-operative Socy. Business Premises, Lynemouth.
 A Wooden Dwelling, Woodhorn Links.
 New Farm House, Lane End, North Seaton.
 New Hall and Institute, Ellington.
 Conversion of old Institute into Dwelling, Ellington.
 Addition to Dwelling, Ellington.
 Alterations and Additions, Stobshill Farm, Morpeth.
 Lock-up Shop, Red Row.
 Memorial Hall, Pegswood.
 New Engineers House, Pegswood.
 Wood Bungalow, Morpeth (South).
 Conversion of Golf Club Pavilion into Dwelling—Morpeth Common
 New Council School, Stobswood.
 Wood Bungalow, Causey Park.
 „ „ , Moor House, Woodhorn.
 „ „ , Tiledsheds Plantation, Longhirst.
 New House, Cottingwood Estate, Morpeth.

HOUSING, ETC. ACT, 1923.

Applications for the subsidy and plans have been submitted under the above act and agreed to as follows:—

For 235—3 Roomed house, Lynemouth.

36—6	„	„	„
12—3	„	„	Linton.
1—4	„	„	House, Longhorsley.
1—4	„	„	Bungalow, Morpeth.
1—4	„	„	Hepscott.
42—4	„	„	Houses, Grangewood, Stobswood.
2 4	„	„	„ Norwood, „

Total ... 330

CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPATION.

After inspecting each house Certificates of Occupation have been granted for

125 New Houses at Lynemouth.

33 „ „ „ Linton.

4 „ „ „ West Thirston.

4 „ „ „ Grangewood, Stobswood.

TOTAL...166

LINTON HOUSING SCHEME.

During the year very good progress has been made with this scheme.

The sewage disposal works have been completed for some months now, and the effluent has always been found satisfactory.

This is a great improvement on the old system.

LYNEMOUTH HOUSING SCHEME.

Good progress has been made with this scheme during the year.

A water supply has been laid on from Linton Colliery.

The new 18-in Main Sewer with a cast iron sea outfall has been completed.

STORAGE OF PETROLEUM SPIRIT.

A License has been granted for the storage of Petroleum spirit at Longhorsley.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, AND MILK SHOPS ORDERS AND MILK AND DAIRIES (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1922.

During the year 32 persons have been registered under the above orders.

In some cases it has been necessary to give an informal notice for lime washing, which has been done.

SCAVENGING.

In the parishes of Ulgham, Widdrington, and Chevington West the scavenging is carried out by your Council the working being done by Contract.

Only by constant supervision can the Contractors be made to do the work satisfactorily.

The scavenging in the other parishes is done privately.

I have found it necessary on several occasions to call the attention of the Pegswood Colliery Company to the unsatisfactory way in which their scavenging is done.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Disinfection has been carried out after cases of infectious diseases, as follows :—

Scarlet Fever	...	74
Diphtheria	... ..	12
Small Pox	... ..	6
Tuberculosis...	... ..	4
Erysipelas	... ..	1
Enteric Fever	...	1

There having been several cases of Scarlet Fever in the village of Hepscott the Governors asked me to disinfect the School, this I did.

When the outbreak of Small Pox occurred at Pegswood your Council's Small Pox Hospital was ready to receive patients.

During December six cases occurred at Pegswood, all in different streets.

In each case the patient was removed to Hospital, the house thoroughly disinfected, and the bedding destroyed as requested by the M O.H.

As agreed on by the Council the bedding has been replaced.

The purchase of a small steam disinfector by your Council will effect a great saving should any further cases occur.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

JAS. ATKINSON.

HOUSING CONDITIONS.

STATISTICS

Year ended 31st December, 1923.

1.—GENERAL.

(1) Estimated population ...	...	...	18270
(2) General Death-rate ...	...	...	including Asylum, 13·4 in District, 19·3.
(3) Death-rate from Tuberculosis ...	...	...	0·87 per 1000.
(4) Infantile mortality ...	...	...	57·6 per 1000.
(5) Number of dwelling-houses of all classes ...	...	...	3284.
(6) Number of working-class dwelling-houses ...	...	...	2976.
(7) Number of new working-class houses erected	...	...	166.

2.—UNFIT DWELLING-HOUSES.

I.—INSPECTION.

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	...	...	156.
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District Regulations), 1910 ...	...	...	345.
(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous and injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	...	...	43.
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ...	...	...	20.

II.—REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	65
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III.—ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS.

A.—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., 1919—

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ..
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit—
- (a) by owners
- (b) by Local Authority in default of owners
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close Nil.

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.—

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied Nil.
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied—
- (a) by owners
- (b) by Local Authority in default of owners

C. Proceedings under section 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909.—

- (1) Number of representations made with a view to making of Closing Orders ... Nil.
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made ...
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit
- (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... Nil.
- (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... Nil.
- The Closing Orders made have not become operative owing to lack of Housing Accommodation.

3.—UNHEALTHY AREAS.

Areas represented to the Local Authority with a view to Improvement Schemes under (a), Part I., or (b). Part II., of the Act of 1890 :—

- (1) Name of area
- (2) Acreage
- (3) Number of working-class houses in area... ..
- (4) Number of working-class persons to be displaced.
- Nil.

4.—Number of houses not complying with the building bye-laws erected with consent of Local Authority under section 25 of the Housing Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919 Nil.

5.—Staff engaged on housing work with, briefly, duties of each officer M.O.H., Sanitary Inspector, and Consulting Water Engineer.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.—Sanitary Officers Order, 1922, Art. XIX. (12).

[illegible]

Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910. (Act V.)

Statistics for the year ended December 31st, 1923.

[illegible]

